

# Chapter 2.0

## Georgetown Neighborhood Plan Cornerstones

### Introduction and Background

Located approximately three miles south of Downtown Seattle in the Duwamish Valley corridor, Georgetown generates both economic and social benefits that extend far beyond its neighborhood boundaries. These benefits represent important City assets in meeting the goals and objectives of the Seattle Comprehensive Plan, particularly the plan's commitment to maintaining the distinct characteristics of Seattle neighborhoods, the industrial job base for family wage employment, and preservation of affordable single-family housing.

In Summer of 1995, the Georgetown community was selected as one of three pilot planning projects for launching the Seattle Neighborhood Planning program. Between 1995 and early 1998, the Georgetown Planning Committee worked hard to reach out to all sectors of the community, identify needs, and develop committee-based recommendations to address local industrial, commercial, and residential issues and concerns.

**Key Integrated Plan Strategies.** Through the course of developing several other plans, the Seattle Neighborhood Planning Office developed a means for helping community groups package key ideas and important strategies. This methodology, known as "Key Integrated Plan Strategies," has been utilized to structure the Georgetown Neighborhood Plan in a way to reflect shared community priorities, while still reflecting the different needs of the area's manufacturing/ industrial and residential populations. The following discussion presents these key strategies as the Cornerstones of the

Georgetown Neighborhood Plan. These cornerstone elements represent the basic and main part, or the foundation, of the plan, helping set the priorities of the neighborhood's shared interests, as well as the different areas of emphasis for the manufacturing/ industrial and residential communities. They are:

#### GC-1 Seattle Design District

Establishes a focal point for economic development, transportation, and community amenities, while promoting the wholesale design/gift trades.

#### GC-2 Georgetown Residential Neighborhood **Anchor**

Creates a framework for setting priorities that principally affects Georgetown's residential enclave. Elements include land use designations, community amenities, open space, and the environment.

#### GC-3 Safer Georgetown

Strengthens the emphasis on public safety as a shared interest of Georgetown's businesses and residents.

#### CC-4 Promoting Industry and Family Wage Jobs

Provides a framework for setting priorities for Georgetown's manufacturing and industrial areas, with specific emphasis on job growth, technology, and preservation of industrial lands for industrial uses.

### GC-5 Code Enforcement and Permit Processing

Establishes priorities for specific land use concerns that stand out as a shared interest of Georgetown's residential and business communities.

In addition to these cornerstone components, the Georgetown Neighborhood Plan also contains three elements discussed in Chapter 3.0:'

- Economic Development
- Transportation Facilities
- The Environment

## **GC-1 Seattle Design District**

**Issue/Discussion.** The home fashion and wholesale design and gift trades represent a significant economic presence in Georgetown, and stand out as the hub of these industries for the entire Pacific Northwest. The Seattle Design and Gift Centers draw numerous industry-serving wholesalers, distributors, and fabricators to Georgetown to take advantage of this customer base. This confluence of related businesses generate a common identity which will continue to grow if more related businesses relocate to or expand in Georgetown. The businesses can generally be described as having less than 20 employees, pay higher than average wages, cater to a more affluent customer base, are environmentally-friendly, and frequently import and export internationally.

The creation and recognition of a Seattle Design District would capitalize on the existing character and function of area businesses, help promote the continued economic growth of this industry sector, and establish a unifying identity for design-related trades and the Georgetown community.

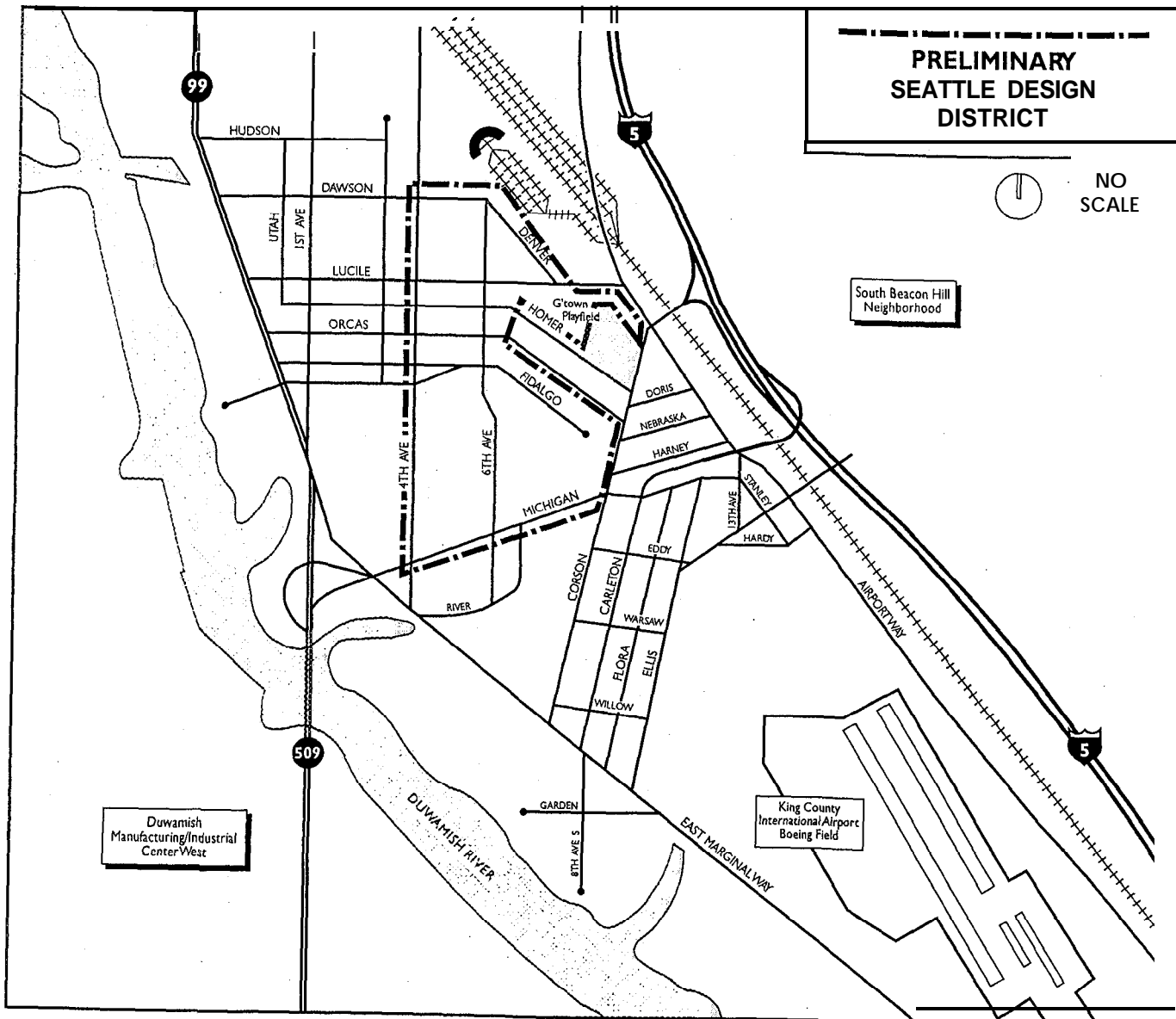
**Overriding Goal.** A Seattle Design District that capitalizes on the regional presence of the Seattle Design/Gift Centers and the ancillary uses in the wholesale, retail, and design-manufacturing related trades to foster economic development and physical visibility of these industries.

### Recommendations

**GC-1.1 Definition of Boundaries.** For purposes of defining the extent of the Seattle Design District, Figure 1 on the following page generally outlines the areas of Georgetown to be included. It reaches from the hub of the Seattle Design/Gift Center buildings to the north and west, to Corson Avenue S on the east, and to Michigan Street to the south.

**CC-1.2 Physical Improvements.** Part of defining the district is identifying it physically through signage and gateway entries. Among the physical improvements sought for the Seattle Design District include the following:

- Highway Signs from I-5 and SR-99 marking exits as Seattle Design District- Georgetown.
- Directional signs on local streets identifying the Seattle Design District.
- Pedestrian Kiosks with District maps and Vehicle signs with District maps.
- Gateway markers with special plantings, signage, and other physical improvements. Possible locations include 4th Avenue S at Dawson, 4th & Michigan, Airport Way S at Lucile Street, Corson Avenue S, and Airport Way near Hardy Street.



## PROPOSED SEATTLE DESIGN DISTRICT

The above map illustrates the proposed boundaries of the Seattle Design District. The district's hub focuses on the area near the Seattle Design and Gift Center, but tries to also capture the parts of Georgetown that include wholesale, showroom, assembly, manufacturing, and other design-related trades. An effort has also been made to connect to ancillary commercial retail areas to promote use of local facilities and services. Note that the residential area near the Georgetown Playfield is not included in the district's proposed boundaries.

- Repair and resurface streets and arterials, rebuild shoulders and parking strips to improve vehicular flow in the areas around the Seattle Design District, and provide better on street parking for events held periodically throughout the year, and assure greater pedestrian safety.

GC-1.3 Marketing Design- and Gift-Related Trades. The model for the Seattle Design District can be found in other cities with design and gift marts, including San Francisco and West Hollywood, CA. Learning from these other districts, the following recommendations are made to support the future vitality and economic strength of the design- and gift-related trades in Georgetown:

- Develop a single, resource directory that includes businesses both inside the Seattle Design Center as well as those located within the district boundaries, and others as qualified.
- Establish a yearly special event. Find public/private funding partnership support for the event. This could be the development of a trade event program that encourages interaction in and out of the Design Center building and spills out into the Design District. It could also include historic tours of the area, open houses of various businesses, and tied into Seattle “Design Awareness Month.”
- Marketing of the wholesale, manufacturing, and showroom-related design trades should be undertaken by the Georgetown Business Association. The mission will be to market the District as the Pacific Northwest’s hub for the design trade industry.

GC-1.4 Design Trade Advisory Committee. The Seattle Design Center working with the Georgetown Business Association should form a Design Trade Advisory Committee. The purpose of that group will be to market design in Georgetown, establish a database of existing design- and gift-related trades, and educate the general public on the importance of design.

## **GC-2 Georgetown Residential Neighborhood Anchor**

**Issue/Discussion.** Georgetown’s residential neighborhood consists of two pockets of single-family and multifamily areas. These enclaves, in existence since well before the turn of the century, currently house anywhere between 1,200 to 1,500 residents. This cornerstone of the Neighborhood Plan reflects the priorities and recommended actions of Georgetown’s residential community. It serves as their blueprint for continued existence in the future, a desire for basic city services, and the need for community amenities typical of other Seattle residential neighborhoods. Recommendations for this plan cornerstone fall under these categories:

- Land Use
- Residential Quality of Life
- Open Space/Recreation
- Community Identity/Historic Preservation

## A. land Use

**Overriding Goal.** To ensure recognition, preservation, enhancement, and validation of Georgetown's residential area as a viable place where people live and raise families.

**GC-2A.1 Neighborhood Anchor Designation.** Approve the designation to encompass the non-contiguous residential-zoned lands, park lands, and old commercial core in Georgetown, as depicted in Figure 2. The designation simply recognizes Georgetown as a place where people live, shop, and work. It would recognize the community, in the same way the City recognizes places like Madison Park, Montlake, Madrona, and even the commercial district in the Ballard-Interbay-Northend Manufacturing/Industrial Center. Proponents of the designation believe it would protect existing residential and commercial zoning, while also potentially serving as a positive influence for attracting future public and private investment. Georgetown has been a Seattle neighborhood for more than 100 years, and the neighborhood anchor would help validate and endorse its continued existence.

**GC-2A.2 Preserve Residential-Zoned lands.** Support City policy to preserve and maintain single-family and multifamily residential areas and affordable housing. In Georgetown, this applies to all its residential-zoned areas, including the multifamily zone adjacent to the Georgetown Playfield and the entire 12-block area bounded by Bailey Street to the north, East Marginal Way S to the south, Corson Avenue S to the west, and Ellis Avenue S/Albro Place to the east.

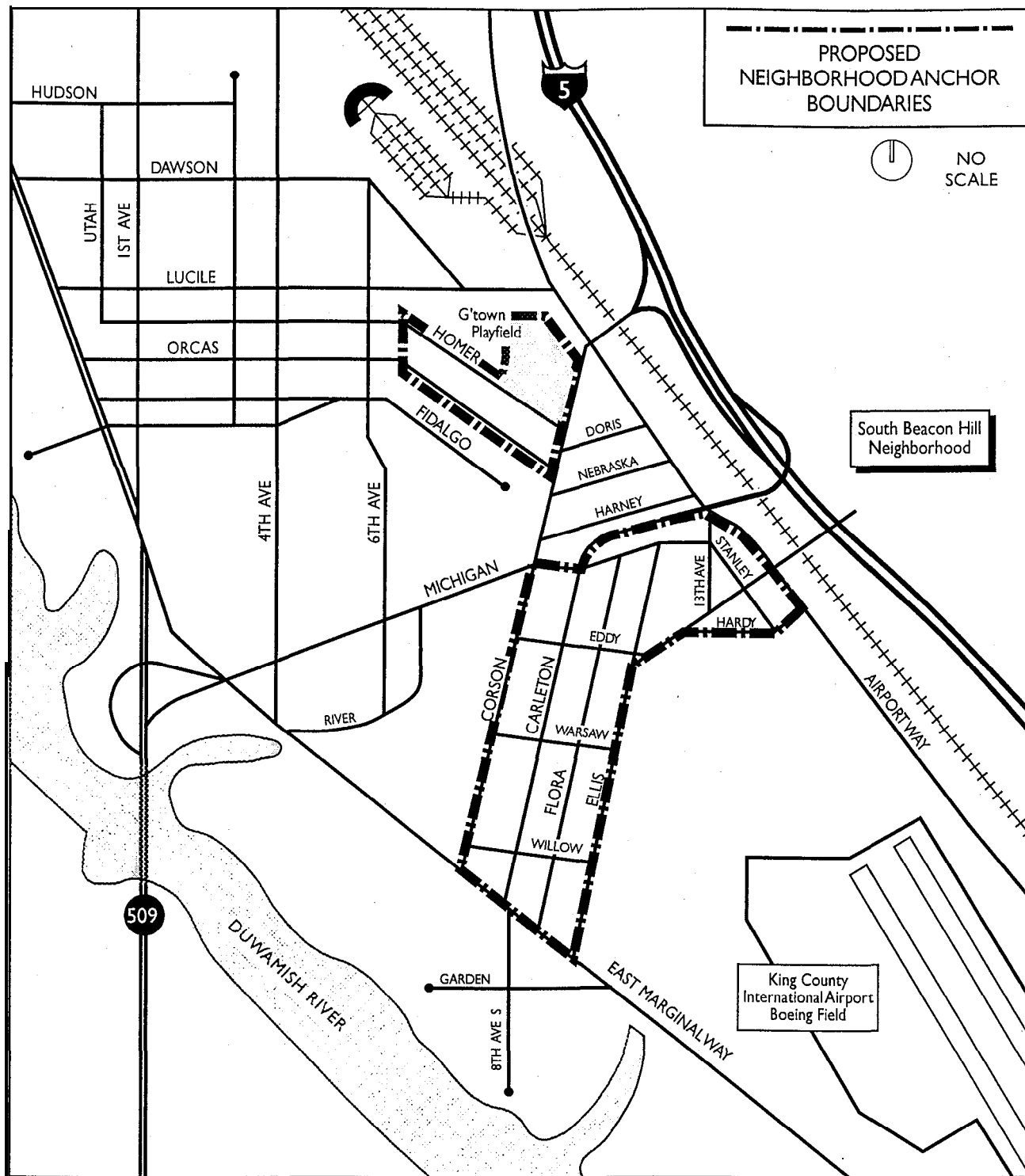
**GC-2A.2 Industrial Buffers.** Maintain and enforce all requirements of the industrial buffer zone. These areas all abut residentially zoned land, and all new development should be consistent with code and land use requirements. Provide incentives for development that exceeds the buffering requirements outlined in the code, i.e., density bonuses, design departures, or transfer of development rights, in exchange for more sensitive treatment of buffer areas.

Also, remove the IB zoning designation from the Georgetown Playfield and recognize it as a dedicated public open space. Because the City does not have a specific zoning classification to recognize parks, we recommend the City should rezone the Playfield as a residential zone similar to how other Seattle parks are zoned.

## B. Residential Quality of life

**Overriding Goal.** A residential community that retains its affordable housing, its diverse housing stock, and provides complementary community facilities that meet the needs of Georgetown's wide mix of people, including seniors, youth, young families, ethnic populations, and longtime residents.

**GC-2B.I Connecting to Georgetown Playfield.** Develop safe connections (i.e., sidewalk/crosswalk improvements, signaling, signage, landscape treatments, and/or designation of pedestrian corridors) to link Georgetown's residential area south of Bailey Street with the Georgetown Playfield and adjacent residential area



## PROPOSED NEIGHBORHOOD ANCHOR BOUNDARY FOR GEORGETOWN

The Phase II outreach process, through the Neighborhood Community Ballot, determined that Georgetown's Neighborhood Anchor designation should be approved for the area's outlined above. It includes all residentially-zoned land in the planning area, as well as the commercial uses south of Interstate 5 between Airport Way S and Corson Avenue S.

**GC-2B.2 Community Facilities.** Provide community facilities and programs that will enhance quality of life and business climate in Georgetown. Recommendations which should be implemented, as funding becomes available, include:

- A Community Center, or multi-use facility for community/business use: job training, computer lab, English as a Second Language (ESL) classes and art classes.
- Mini-City Hall in Old City Hall: employment center, bulletin board, meeting rooms, etc.
- Strategy and funding mechanism for saving the Hat & Boots structures in Georgetown.
- Support and endorsement of a museum in the Steam Plant Building.
- Priority for local community use of the Georgetown Playfield, including improvement to ensure local use: grass field, baseball screen, etc.
- Develop a mini-branch library.

**GC-2B.3 Neighborhood Action Items.** Promote and develop neighborhood-based beautification projects, including those listed below. Seek funding through appropriate City resources such as Department of Neighborhoods, Public Utilities, Arts Commission, City Light.

- tree plantings,
- community entry signs,
- neighborhood clean-ups,
- public art by local artists,
- community festivals or fairs, and
- anti-graffiti campaigns.

## C. Open Space/Recreation

**Overriding Goal.** A community that maintains an open space/recreation network serving both area residents and employees.

**GC-2C.1 Open Space Opportunities.** Develop an open space network to enhance existing spaces, acquire new spaces, and create linkages between parks, recreational, and “green” spaces. Consider ecological and habitat restoration, tree plantings, and other reasonable open space projects:

- Identify pedestrian and bicycle paths/connections with South Park and South Beacon Hill. Connect Georgetown to the Seattle Urban Trail System.
- Expand and enhance existing parks and green spaces, including Gateway North Park on 8th Avenue S at the Duwamish Waterway, 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue Boat Ramp and other street ends, Ruby Chow Park, and the Playfield.
- Secure from the City of Seattle official designation of Gateway North Park as a city park and include the facility on the City’s regular maintenance schedule. Also, maintain the existing sidewalk on 8th Avenue S to allow pedestrians to walk safely to the park and avoid conflicts with vehicles.

**GC-2C.2 Acquiring Open Space in the Residential Core.** Work with the City of Seattle to acquire the Washington State Department of Transportation site located on the 6400 block between Corson and Carleton Avenue S.

Other projects of interest to the residential community which should

receive consideration, as funding becomes available, include:

- Pedestrian and bicycle connections to the Georgetown Steam Plant (work with County).
- Development of a P-Patch or other type of community garden.
- Working with King County International Airport to develop open spaces with public access, plantings, and pathways at the northern end of the airfield's greenbelt.

### C. Community Identity/Historic Preservation

**Overriding Goal.** A community that capitalizes on its unique characteristics, such as its historic character and buildings (e.g., old Rainier Brewery Buildings, Old City Hall, and the Georgetown Steam Plant), and the presence of the Seattle Design Center, to develop amenities and programs that will reinforce Georgetown's image as a quality place to live, work, raise a family, and/or own a business.

**GC-2D.1 Capitalizing on Community Identity.** Capitalize on several features in Georgetown to give the community a sense of identity. Improving the community's image will help relieve perception of crime, strengthen Georgetown's identity, and serve as a marketing tool for promoting economic development in certain markets. Elements of the community which could be capitalized upon include Georgetown's history, the presence of the Seattle Design and Gift Centers, the Duwamish River, and the area's mix of residential, commercial, and industrial activity. Implement community identity components as part of:

- Economic Marketing Programs
- Installation of Community Gateways
- Installation of Public Utilities such as street lighting

**GC-2D.2 Elements of Historic Preservation.** Recognize, preserve, and protect historic elements of the community. The Department of Neighborhoods Office of Conservation should help and encourage property owners of possibly historic buildings to adaptively reuse buildings. Identification of strategies for linking preservation with economic development should be undertaken, with particular emphasis placed on explanation of the benefits (tax credits and national "Main Street" revitalization programs) and impacts (property restrictions and guidelines) of historic preservation.

**GC-2D.3 Support for Complementary Streetscape Improvements.** Promote Georgetown's historic identity through the development of appropriate streetscape improvements in the old commercial area. In conjunction with economic development and public safety recommendations, seek from the City of Seattle the siting and installation of historic street lighting, seating, hanging baskets, traffic and pedestrian improvements, and decorative brick/concrete paving for crosswalks. This should be accomplished by informing local property owners, and funding strategies should be targeted toward public investments with no financial impacts on property owners. Also, work to implement these improvements potentially through relevant mitigation funds to improve local business conditions, quality of life, etc.



#### CC-2D.4 RTA Commuter Rail Connection to Old

Commercial Area. Promote development of a Sounder Commuter Rail station and ensure that its introduction to the community will minimize impacts and result in benefits to economic development, public transportation, and community amenities. Should the station be developed, ensure that the City of Seattle, in concert with Sound Transit, develops pedestrian connections to the old commercial area and capitalizes on Georgetown's historic character as part of station site design.

### **GC-3 Safer Georgetown**

**Issues/Discussion.** Preliminary outreach questionnaires revealed that some people felt unsafe in various parts of the Georgetown planning area. Some of these locations included East Marginal Way S, Airport Way S, the old commercial core, and “nook-and-cranny” areas such as alleys, back streets, and near railroad tracks. Some people also mentioned that while they felt safe during the day, personal safety became a concern after dark. This strong perception of crime belies the actual results of local crime prevention initiatives undertaken over the last 8 to 10 years. In fact, great strides have been made in reducing the number of incidents in several crime categories, including residential burglary, non-residential burglary, robbery, and aggravated assault. Although the data suggests that Georgetown is a safe area to live, work, and own a business, its reputation as an unsafe place continues to persist. To alleviate these fears and promote Georgetown as a safe neighborhood, the Georgetown Planning Committee developed recommended actions to address overall public safety and abatement of nuisance problems.

**Overriding Goal.** To become a community that overcomes the perception of an unsafe neighborhood, while promoting the reality that existing crime prevention programs, in conjunction with proposed public safety improvements, will make the community a safe place to live, work, and do business.

### **Recommendations**

**GC-3.1 Community Policing.** Invest in community policing for Georgetown. This could be a small storefront presence (developed in partnership with Seattle Police) to handle routine complaints alleviating pressure from 9 11 emergency services, promote existing programs like block watches and graffiti removal, and facilitate things such as safety inspections.

**CC-3.2 West Seattle Precinct.** Support the development of a West Seattle precinct. Because there is no precinct in this part of the City, the South Seattle precinct service area is spread widely. A West Seattle precinct would improve patrols and response times in Georgetown by limiting the coverage area of the South Seattle precinct. We strongly support the retention of Georgetown in the South Seattle precinct.

**GC-3.3 Capital Public Safety Improvements.** Act upon the following capital improvements, as funding becomes available:

- Work with Seattle City Light to improve alley lighting. Recognize that such an improvement will likely come first through small City Light grants, then through the formation of a local improvement district. City Light should continue to work with the community to determine these potential costs.

- Work with Seattle City Light to improve the maintenance of existing lights and install new ones in local hotspots that include most residential streets, 13th Avenue S and the old commercial core, areas near the Seattle Design Center, areas near the Georgetown Hayfield, and several others that can be identified in concert with City Light.
  - Work with the City to determine funding and other opportunities for community clean-ups, anti-graffiti programs, tree plantings, and regular maintenance of City streets.
- GC-3.4 Community/Pedestrian Safety. Implement the following capital improvements, as funding becomes available. Because many of these also have transportation-related recommendations, they should be balanced against recommendations made in the Transportation, as well as the overall Duwamish Manufacturing/Industrial Center Plan.
- Work with the City to address pedestrian and children safety in residential alleys. Signage is needed for reducing speeds and indicating children are at play.
  - Work with the SeaTran to examine vehicular movements in the commercial area around East Marginal Way S between Flora and Carleton Avenues S. Currently, traffic flow allows for illegal activities and difficulty for police action.
  - Address the need for creating a safe pedestrian path between the residential core south of Bailey Street to the Georgetown Playfield. Opportunities could include (1) designating a route on the east side of Corson Avenue and making improvements under the freeway overpass; (2) improving the crosswalk at the traffic island on the northwest corner with better painted crosswalks and signage; (3) adding a crossing guard; (4) developing an overpass crosswalk; or any other opportunities identified by the City.
  - Request that the City work with Union Pacific railroad to address pedestrian and vehicular safety where the rail spur crosses Lucile Street. The City should request that the railroad add safety gates with bells, or work out other solutions for improving vehicular and pedestrian safety at these at-grade crossings.
  - The City should add crosswalks along Airport Way S to facilitate pedestrian crossing to reach bus stops.
- GC-3.5 Abatement of Nuisance Problems. Current abatement rules allow for continued abuse of the system, particularly by local motels and multifamily complexes . The City should give serious consideration to requiring on-site building management, and allowing the City Attorney to strengthen the recourse for neighborhoods to address poor management and to abate a facility with chronic criminal activity.
- GC-3.6 landlord Training. To complement the effort to abate nuisance problems, the City of Seattle Police Department is encouraged to sponsor a training/educating seminar for landlords, utilizing the Seattle Neighborhood Group's Landlord Training Manual for Seattle-King County as the model. This type of program

would help reduce the number of mismanaged properties. Also, once the training has been completed, the Police Department or its assigned agent should follow through with a monitoring program from which a landlord could eventually “graduate” and be deemed self-sufficient to deal with on-site illegal activity.

The landlord training program should be established as an on-going effort and could be taken up as an action item and public service provided by the Georgetown Business Association.

#### **GC-4 Promoting Industry And Family Wage Jobs**

***Community validation event discussion and ballot returns indicate this section does not have broad community support. Respondents felt it promoted industrial interests at the expense of quality of life and environmental health. Also, the community's commitment to habitat restoration on the Duwamish waterway conflicts with recommendations for increasing industrial uses of the waterway.***

**Issues/Discussion.** The Georgetown area currently accommodates approximately 12,000 employees, excluding the Boeing Company. The City of Seattle has established a growth target of 10,000 net new jobs in the Duwamish Manufacturing/Industrial Center as their portion of King County's estimate for job growth, as per the State Growth Management Act of 1990. Georgetown's industrial areas can be expected to accommodate a certain amount of that growth, but no specific targets have been estimated for the community. The Georgetown Community set land use and economic

development priorities to govern how this growth should and can occur in Georgetown. The following goals and recommendations depict how the area's manufacturing and industrial stakeholders wish to promote industry and family wage job growth.

**Overriding Goal.** An economically strong and vital manufacturing and industrial center that places priority on job creation, business growth, and strategic ways for developing, training, and networking the local workforce with the local Georgetown employment base.

#### **A. land Use**

##### **GC-4A.1 Manufacturing/Industrial Center Plan Policies.**

For Georgetown, the following should be considered:

- If the city is dedicated to ensuring the 10,000 new jobs in industrial areas, it would be prudent to adopt a policy rather than a goal of no net loss of industrial zoning;
- Because of Georgetown's mix of industrial, commercial, and residential uses, the policies relating to limiting commercial or residential uses in industrial/manufacturing areas should be enforced. Also, continue to permit legally established non-conforming uses to exist (those “grandfathered” in) and allow their limited expansion within their property boundaries as described in the Comprehensive Plan and City Land Use Code.

**GC-4A.2 Maintain Industrial-Zoned Lands.** Support the City Comprehensive Plan goal of maintaining industrial-zoned lands as a means of accommodating family-wage job opportunities. Currently, within the Georgetown planning area, this includes all lands zoned IG1, IG2, and IB. (excluding the Georgetown Hayfield).

## B. Economic Development

GC-4B.1 City Investment Programs. As outlined in the City's Comprehensive Plan, the City of Seattle should carefully consider any intervention programs designed to enhance entrepreneurial opportunities in Georgetown, taking into consideration that they are both desirable and achievable. Similarly, the City should make efforts to assist Georgetown businesses capital needs through issuance of Industrial Development Bonds and other City, State, and Federal sponsored business programs, with specific emphasis on small business financing programs geared toward assembly, manufacturing, high-technology, distribution, and wholesaling trades.

GC-4B.2 Public Infrastructure Investments. To ensure the area continues to thrive as a center of commerce and industry, invest in public infrastructure such as improved roads, storm and sanitation sewers, and public utilities that will promote the expected family-wage job growth desired by the City in its designated manufacturing and industrial areas. This is needed throughout Georgetown.

GC-4B.3 Water-Dependent Uses. Because Georgetown is home to industries dependent upon immediate access to the Duwamish Waterway, City implementation of the Seattle Shoreline Master Program should give appropriate emphasis to preserving the shoreline of the Duwamish for existing and future water-based industrial use. This recommendation should be coordinated with other environmental and natural habitat proposals sponsored by other local and regional public agencies.

GC-4B.4 Marketing Plan for Georgetown. To help promote both existing trades and target industries that fit into Georgetown's "niche" markets such as the design- and gift-related trades, water-based industries, aviation industries, and wholesale distribution, a Marketing Plan should be created for Georgetown. The Plan should consist of but not be limited to the following and be implemented by the Georgetown Business Association and Georgetown Crime Prevention and Community Council with assistance from the Neighborhood Business Council and City Office of Economic Development.

- Mission Statement.
- Description of existing economic conditions in Georgetown.
- Description of Georgetown's industrial "niche" markets.
- Benefits of being located in Georgetown: access, proximity to Downtown, affordability.
- Why businesses should come to Georgetown?

CC-4B.5 Programs for the Workforce. A City demonstration program should be created that matches local resources in Georgetown to enhance the skills and quality of the local workforce. Because of the many existing resources, opportunities abound. These include but may not be limited to establishing curriculum for different industry-based internships or apprenticeships at Cleveland High School; matching skills and class curriculum at the Seattle Duwamish Industrial Center with those of different Georgetown businesses; and coordinating and possibly subsidizing local businesses in a wide variety of trades to take on apprentices or

vocational school students. Also cross-reference to the Seattle Jobs Initiative discussion in ED-2.

GC-4B.6 Developing a Georgetown Network linking Jobs and People. A local multi-purpose facility should be created to house a job training program, English as a Second Language (ESL) classes, bulletin boards, and other job networking opportunities. This type of facility could be developed in conjunction with local efforts to identify a community center and meeting/conference room. This facility should be promoted as a meeting place and hub of activity where both employers and employees can identify opportunities for jobs and workforce. Also cross-reference to the Seattle Jobs Initiative discussion in ED-2.

## **GC-5 Code Enforcement and Permit Processing**

**Issues/Discussion.** In Georgetown, residents and business owners both share concerns about the lack of stringent code enforcement, non-compliant uses, the inability to abate properties in non-compliance, and the difficulty, delay, and inconsistency of building permit processing. The community recognizes that these issues are not just specific to Georgetown, but have citywide relevance. Over the course of the neighborhood planning process, a range of concerns specific to Georgetown has been raised. The following recommendations represent Georgetown's residential and business concerns relevant to code enforcement and permit processing.

**Overriding Goal.** In the future, responsible and efficient City action, especially non-compliance and abatement of illegal and criminal uses, as well as streamlined permit processing.

## **Recommendations**

GC-5.1 **Permit Processing.** The City's permit processing system is cumbersome, random, and inefficient. Interviews and personal experiences of businesses trying to expand, builders and real estate property managers have all shared concerns related to the interpretation of building and fire codes, as well as implementation of shoreline master program permitting. To improve permit processing, the City should enforce a true 120-day permit processing requirement (to grant or issue a permit), train its staff to ensure a consistent message and interpretation of the processes, and invest in more customer service support.

CC-5.2 **Ombudsman: Handling of Complaints.** The City should have a complaint department which takes complaints, logs them, and provides the reporting citizen with a tracking number for ensuring follow-up actions. The department should send the numbered complaint to all relevant department heads for immediate action. The key consideration will be responsiveness to the reporting citizen to ensure that the complaint has been adequately attended. If no solution can be found, the department should institute an ombudsman to resolve conflicts and ensure department accountability.

CC-5.3 Code Enforcement. In large part, the issue is not the content but rather the efficient and timely enforcement of codes on non-compliant uses. The City should ensure the consistent enforcement of its codes in Georgetown, providing adequate service in the community comparable to that experienced in all other parts of the City. To ensure these basic services, the City should establish code enforcement as a staffing budget priority, with particular attention given to land use, zoning, building safety, and public health codes.

buildings, and covenants for allowing industry to operate without complaint.

GC-5.4 Recommendations Regarding Existing Codes. Consider the following specific items:

- As a place of industry, Georgetown is home to some businesses that deal with hazardous materials. Because of the close proximity of residential areas, playfields, and schools to industry, the City should consider redefining its land use code to address “high-impact” uses, with the intent of enforcing existing requirements and creating specific standards for “high-impact” uses relative to its proximity to residential areas. These uses should include those that deal in the storage, mixture, and transport of highly toxic materials that put the general public at risk.
- Continue to allow artist lofts as a viable use in industrial zones. This type of use is appropriate to Georgetown’s older buildings, providing a new life for some of the historic structures. Their presence allows for an economic reuse of historic structures and/or properties with environmental considerations. Artist lofts also allow for a diversity of people, preservation of significant